

Member Conduct Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

Flourish House aims to provide an environment that is safe for members and staff; and promotes an atmosphere where staff, members and visitors to the Clubhouse are made to feel welcome. Flourish House recognises the need to balance between being open to vulnerable and marginalised people, some of whom may present with challenging behaviours, and the need to ensure safety and security of everyone in the Clubhouse.

Purpose

This Policy seeks to set out the standards of behaviour expected of staff, members and visitors to Flourish House and to make clear the procedure for managing incidents involving members. Issues or concerns about Staff conduct is managed by a separate policy.

House Rules

The general rules concerning the behaviour of people in Flourish House have to be clear and unambiguous and also need to be implemented fairly and consistently.

Although not an exhaustive list, the following statements reflect the positive behaviour that Flourish House seeks to engender.

- Language should be positive, respectful and non-threatening. No offensive or aggressive language - spoken or written - has a place in the Clubhouse
- We must behave in a way that conveys respect and dignity to our fellow staff and member colleagues. Offensive, intimidating, threatening or aggressive behaviour will be challenged.
- The Clubhouse is a place that is safe and accepting of all. We will therefore tackle any comments or behaviour that could be considered racist, sexist or anti-gay
- The Clubhouse will not tolerate violence or threats of violence
- Members and staff will not be permitted to participate under the influence of alcohol / drugs
- No illegal drugs should be brought into the Clubhouse
- There should be no dealing or encouraging others to deal in contraband or drugs.

Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour

If staff consider it necessary to challenge behaviour they should notify a second member of staff in advance so that assistance and support can be available if necessary. Where possible a senior member of staff should be consulted. Whenever unacceptable behaviour requires to be challenged this should always be done by the staff member in a manner that is respectful, non-judgmental and non-threatening. The purpose of this intervention will be to:

- emphasise that inappropriate behaviour is not acceptable and the impact this behaviour has on fellow colleagues
- re-establish boundaries and explore consequences to member if behaviour continues

In most cases this type of intervention will be enough to resolve the matter and an incident report should be completed and kept in the incident file.

Asking a Member to Leave

If a member of staff considers a members behaviour warrants them being asked to leave they should, circumstances permitting, consult with a Senior Project Worker or the manager. If the decision is made to exclude the member for the rest of the day, the Senior Project Worker or manager should ask the member to leave.

If a Member refuses to leave they should be informed that the police will be called. If they still refuse to leave the police must be called.

Details of the circumstances leading to the member being asked to leave should be recorded in an incident form should be completed and kept in the Incident File. The manager should be informed at the earliest opportunity.

Deciding What to do Next

When someone has been asked to leave it is important that a decision is reached as quickly as possible regarding their re-entry into the Clubhouse. The staff member who records the incident should meet with the most senior member of staff (manager or senior project worker) available in Flourish House within 2 working days of the member being asked to leave.

The manager or senior project worker will have the authority to decide what action to take following an incident. Before reaching a decision the following questions should be considered:

- seriousness of the incident
- the risk to the safety of others in Flourish House
- involvement in previous incidents

The following should also be considered:

- the importance of consistency and clarity when imposing exclusions
- the need to demonstrate fairness and respect for all member and staff.

The outcome of the meeting is to be recorded on the Incident report form and copied to the Manager.

A copy must be kept in the Incident Report file.

Flourish House will do all that it can to ensure members are able to attend the Clubhouse whenever they wish to do so. However after an investigation has been carried out, it may be considered appropriate to take further action:

- exclusion on the day was sufficient - no further action
- exclusion for 1-4 weeks
- exclusion for 1-12 months (by the manager only and after consulting with senior staff)
- indefinite exclusion. (to be done by the manager and only after consultation with senior staff. The Board should be informed in this incidence)

Where two people are concerned in the exchange of drugs both will be excluded from Flourish House and the police will be informed.

Excluding a Member

Members will be informed of the decision ideally both verbally and in writing. When informing the member verbally there must be two staff present.

Exclusion letters should always come from the Manager or nominated deputy.

Members who have been excluded may not enter the building or use any of the services (e.g. social events, college or TE Placements.)

Appeal

Members can appeal any decision to exclude them. This should be within 5 working days of the notification of exclusion being given. They can appeal in writing to the Secretary of Flourish House who will inform the Chair of the Flourish House Board of Directors. The Chair will arrange for a review of the incident to be carried out and contact the member within 28 days.

The Board will hear the appeal and their decision is final. During any appeal the original exclusion still applies. The decision of the appeal panel will if at all possible be communicated to the member within a further 5 working days.

After Exclusion - Meeting With the Member

There must be a meeting between staff and member when a member returns to the House after being excluded for more than one day, to ascertain where possible the factors which resulted in exclusion and to try to help the member deal differently with issues in the future.

An appointment will be given to the member and until this meeting takes place the member may not resume use of Flourish House services. i.e. if client arrives after a period of exclusion is finished they may not use Flourish until they have met with staff - even if this means another few days until a meeting can be arranged.

Information Sharing Between Agencies

In the interests of safety there are times when it may be appropriate to share information with other agencies. This requires the permission of the Manager of Flourish House.

When information is received about members from other agencies, which has safety implications, it will be shared between relevant staff and if necessary a meeting will be held to decide whether the member should be allowed access to Flourish House.

Review

This policy is to be reviewed every 3 years.